

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/690,309

Examiner

Michael Cuff

Applicant(s)

SPERO ET AL.

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 2/8/06.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1,2,5,7,8,13-15,18,19,21,23,24,27,29,30,35-37,40,41,43,45,47,49,51,52,56,57,59,60 and 62.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Stuart Rudoler on 2/8/06.

The claims 1, 23, and 45 have been amended as follows: (see next three pages)

1. (currently amended) A method for processing a paper expense receipt using a computer system comprising the steps of:

receiving at a computer input device the paper expense receipt from an individual incurring an expense;

receiving on a computer processor an electronic image of the expense receipt from the computer input device;

processing the electronic image to automatically obtain expense data by:-

using character recognition software to obtain text data from the electronic image; and

parsing the text data to determine the expense data position within the text

data; and

populating an electronic expense report with the expense data; and

displaying the electronic expense report to the individual; ~~and~~

wherein the position of the expense data on the expense receipt is not predefined for the computer system.

23. (currently amended) A computer readable medium containing instructions for controlling a computer system to perform a method for storing a paper expense receipt comprising the steps of:

receiving at a computer input device the paper expense receipt from an individual incurring an expense;

receiving on a computer processor an electronic image of the expense receipt;

processing the electronic image to automatically obtain expense data by;

using character recognition software to obtain text data from the electronic image; and

parsing the text data to determine the expense data position within the text

data; and

populating an electronic expense report with the expense data; and

displaying the electronic expense report to the individual; and

wherein the position of the expense data on the expense receipt is not predefined for the computer system.

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45. (currently amended) A computer system for processing a paper expense receipt comprised of:

a computer input device for receiving the paper expense receipt from an individual incurring an expense, and creating an electronic image of the receipt;

a computer processor in communication with the computer input device;

a software module operating on the computer processor for processing the electronic image to obtain expense data by;

applying character recognition techniques to obtain text data from the electronic image; and

parsing the text data to determine the expense data position within the text data;
and

a software module operating on the computer processor for filling in an expense report with the expense data; and

a display in communication with the computer on which the expense report is displayed to the individual; and

wherein the position of the expense data on the expense receipt is not predefined for the computer system.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 13-15, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24, 27, 29, 30, 35, 36, 37, 40, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49, 51, 52, 56, 57, 59, 60 and 62 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Claims 1, 23, and 45 recite limitations for a method, computer readable medium and computer system, which receives at an input device a paper expense receipt, receives at a processor an electronic image of the receipt, processes the electronic image to automatically obtain expense data by using character recognition software to obtain text data from the electronic image; and parsing the text data to determine the expense data position within the text data, wherein the position of the expense data on the expense receipt is not predefined, and populates an electronic expense report with the expense data. None of the prior art cited shows or teaches the full combination of these limitations.

Creating digital images of receipts is old and well known. Data mining information off of financial documents such as receipts is also well known. However, almost all of the prior art shows that the data must be in a defined position. For example, foreign reference Ito uses a "fixed-form" invoice, the Treibach-Heck et al. (used in the last rejection) and the Higgins et al. references use templates, and the Riach et al. references uses "zones".

The Caslavka reference creates a digital image and a human operator determines the position of the data and "keys" the amount data. In this case, the position of the data is not predefined, but the position is not automatically determined.

MaCauley is a NPL reference of interest using OCR to archive electronic data capture.

Claims 2, 5, 7, 8, 13-15, 18, 19, 21, 24, 27, 29, 30, 35, 36, 37, 40, 41, 43, 47, 49, 51, 52, 56, 57, 59, 60 and 62 are dependent upon claims 1, 23, and 45.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael Cuff whose telephone number is (571) 272-6778. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00 to 5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Alexander Kalinowski can be reached on (571) 272-6771. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

 2/8/06
Michael Cuff
February 8, 2006